

ODP-1395-77  
14 JUL 1977

MEMORANDUM FOR: Executive Officer, DDA  
FROM : Executive Officer, ODP  
SUBJECT : DD/Administrative Notice No. 77-5,  
Letter of Instruction

ODP has the following comments and questions concerning this Notice.

1. Paragraph 1 speaks of "additional guidance" but does not cite existing references.

2. Paragraph 3 seems to be saying that LOI's are the mechanism for applying MBO at the individual employee level. Why not come right out and say it? The key words in this paragraph are "work outputs". This needs to be emphasized. Position Descriptions are input and process oriented but do not specify the individual outputs desired. This is the role of the LOI.

3. Paragraph 4 Step 4 needs to be expanded to clarify how the supervisor evaluates the employee with regard to the LOI in the annual Fitness Report (FR). Some supervisors have adopted the technique of listing and rating LOI objectives as Duties in the FR. Others comment on LOI objectives in the Narrative to substantiate Ratings. Which is correct?

4. Paragraph 5 does not provide much guidance. If employees (all I presume down to GS-3 and 4 clerical employees) are going to draft their own LOI's, they need some models. Also, the fact that LOI's can be changed during the year needs to be stated.

5. Paragraph 6 indicates that all DDA employees must have a new LOI each year. Is this correct? What control mechanism will be used to check compliance? Few supervisors would write FR's if the Office of Personnel did not notify them when they were due and remind them when they were late. I suspect the same will be true of LOI's unless someone polices this

program. One approach would be to require a copy of next year's LOI (and after the first year, the previous year's) be attached to the annual FR. This could be done at the Office or DDA level.

6. Does Paragraph 7 mean that each Office should set up its own procedures to ensure compliance with this instruction? The Notice does not clearly define who has the responsibility for ensuring compliance.

7. In summary, ODP agrees with the concept of yearly LOI's for all, but believes the procedures and responsibilities should be more clearly defined in the Notice.

STATINTL



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*EO Action*

*Comments to Z next couple of days*

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PERSONNEL

1 JULY 1977

DD/A ADMINISTRATIVE  
NOTICE NO. 77-5

LETTERS OF INSTRUCTION

*to what existing references*

1. This Notice provides additional guidance and instruction in the purpose and implementation of the Letters of Instruction (LOI) Program. Effective immediately the Program of Letters of Instruction will be restructured to comply with procedures as outlined.
2. Letters of Instruction are designed to reduce to writing key areas for emphasis in supervisory/subordinate relationships. The purpose of the LOI Program is to improve job performance. This can be accomplished by increasing mutual understanding of work and career goals.
3. The Letter of Instruction is a forward-looking document which focuses employee efforts on key performance objectives. It is meant to be a management tool useful in fostering open communications and increasing employee commitment to specified objectives. The LOI is not a position description and is not intended to cover the full range of an employee's duties. It is a mechanism for identifying selected and specific work areas for emphasis and special consideration during the coming year. Although the LOI may be used as one input to the performance evaluation process it does not provide the sole basis for the overall evaluation of the employee. It lists only selected work outputs which do not represent the total or possibly even the majority of the employee's work efforts. It is appropriate to formally evaluate the employee's accomplishments of LOI objectives, but this should not be overemphasized in relation to the primary function of the LOI as a forward-looking action plan toward specified goals.
4. LOIs should be prepared as a joint effort between supervisors and subordinates. It is suggested that four steps are appropriate in the preparation and utilization of the LOI.
  - Step 1 - Supervisor discusses with subordinate general duties of position and key work and career objectives to be accomplished in upcoming year.

*[Handwritten signature]*

Step 2 - Subordinate drafts LOI.

Step 3 - Subordinate reviews draft with supervisor... and they agree on selection of objectives/goals for the subordinate.

Step 4 - Supervisor evaluates level of accomplishment of established objectives/goals as part of the annual Fitness Report.

5. Format of the LOI is flexible, however, complex or legalistic documents should be resisted. Simplicity and informality should be key in any chosen format. It must be recognized that much of the value of LOIs lie in the communications process which occurs before the actual document is produced.

6. LOIs should be prepared for each DDA careerist immediately following completion of the person's annual fitness report. Thus, within a short period of time the employee and his/her supervisor will have the opportunity to review the past year's performance and to emphasize key goals and objectives to be accomplished during the coming year. For new employees LOIs should be prepared within ninety days of the individual's assignment.

7. Representatives of the Offices of Training and Personnel are available to assist those who are involved in the development and introduction of LOI procedures appropriate to the Career Sub-Group concerned.

John F. Blake  
Deputy Director  
for  
Administration

*What is control mechanism? How does an ~~the~~ office or the DD check compliance? OP checks FR's when due. Who will check LOI'S?*

*Nothing here is new except the explicit time set for LOI preparation.*

STATINTL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

The LOI is a generally  
superfluous document whose  
only value is obtained in  
the case of an employee  
who is either brand new or  
a problem or both.

Your comments on control  
mechanism are quite appropriate.

13 Only

Date

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FORM 101 USE PREVIOUS  
5-75 EDITIONS